



Sermon Notes from 23 June

Orphans No Longer (*Galatians 4*)

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Christians struggle to live in the freedom that has already been given to them because they do not know who they are. We have a problem with our identity. If you don't know who you are, you will work like a slave to prove who you are. Paul tells us we are no longer slaves but children of God because of His adoption over us. This is the apex of Christianity.

3 Things About Being Adopted As Children Of God:

1) How are we adopted? (Ga. 3:26-4:5)

Ga. 3:26 – All who are in Christ Jesus through faith, are sons of God. Our relationship with our Father in Heaven is not about doing, it's about being – His sons and daughters.

Paul was pro-women when he referred to them as 'sons' also. Women in the first century had no rights. Paul's reference to women as 'sons', granted them equal rights as men. Paul also addressed racial and class division (Ga.3:28). Children of God are all sons and daughters in His family who are united and not divided!

This is how we are adopted as God's children – initiated by our Father in Heaven, redeemed as spiritual slaves for the highest price by the Son and adopted into God's family as sons and daughters. All that is required is our faith in Jesus Christ.

2) What privileges have we received (Ga. 4:5-7)

v5 – The goal of redemption is adoption. It is a gift received, not a reward earned. During the first century, slaves were seen as property and not as people. They had no basic human privileges at all. This is our human condition. To be

redeemed and adopted means to be set free from slavery and to receive a new identity – you are now a son, recognized as a person with privileges, protected by the law of the land, and an heir that will receive all the riches from his Father (v7). The greatest privilege we have received from God is a new identity: sons and daughters of the Most High God. If you truly believe in this identity you will experience freedom from the need to prove who you are, the disappointment of unfulfilled dreams, and the fear of judgment!

3) What is the relationship with our Father (Ga. 4:6)?

Not only can we know God, He wants us to experience His glorious Fatherly love. It is the work of the Son that brings us into a relationship with the Father; it is the work of the Spirit who seals the family ties into our hearts. The triune God is working together to make us true sons and daughters!

While the Galatians were mainly Greek speaking, Paul uses an Arabic word (Abba) to show them that they can call God our Father the same way Jesus did hours before His death (Mk. 14:36). We are always connected to the Father who hears and cares for our cries because of the Spirit in our hearts (Ro. 8:26). This means that your backs are covered, cries are understood, and prayers will be answered!

The Father denied the cry of His Son so that our cries of "Abba! Father!" will always be answered. This is the wondrous love of Jesus Christ for us!